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ABSTRACT

Persistence and graduation rates of four types of undergraduate students at the University of California, Davis, (UC Davis) are examined: domestic students with fewer than 12.5 college transfer units, including both regularly admitted students and those admitted by special action; and domestic students admitted with at least 84 but less than 135 college units (junior transfers). Included in the analysis are minority students admitted under an affirmative action effort. Findings include: UC Davis graduated 62.6% of new entrants admitted between 1971 and 1978 with fewer than 12.5 transfer units by winter 1985; a decreasing percentage of students are graduating in 4 years, going from a high of 48.0% for 1972 entrants to 26.6% for 1980 entrants; among new students entering with fewer than 12.5 college units, the proportion of those admitted by special action has increased from 3.8% of the 1971 cohort to 9.7% of the 1984 cohort; of entrants admitted by special action between 1971 and 1978 with fewer than 12.5 college units, only 28.3% had graduated by winter 1985; and 73.8% of students admitted as junior transfers between 1971 and 1980 had graduated by winter 1985. Information is also provided on Scholastic Aptitude Tests scores and grade point averages of new entrants. (SW)

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PERSISTENCE AND GRADUATION OF UC DAVIS UNDERGRADUATES: 1971-1983

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Student Affairs Research and Information
University of California, Davis
February 1986

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Persistence and Graduation of UC Davis Undergraduates: 1971-1983

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

UC Davis graduated 62.6% of new entrants admitted between 1971 and 1978 with fewer than 12.5 college transfer units by Winter 1985, but graduation rates have been declining over time. Of those entering in 1971, 64.0% had graduated by Winter 1985; of those entering in 1978, only 59.1% had done so. A decreasing percentage of students are graduating in four years, going from a high of 48.0% for 1972 entrants to 26.6% for 1980 entrants.

Fourth and seventh quarter persistence rates have been relatively constant for native students since 1971, hovering around 87.9% and 75.1% respectively.

Among new students entering UC Davis with fewer than 12.5 college units, the proportion of those admitted by special action has increased from 3.8% of the 1971 cohort to 9.7% of the 1984 cohort.

Special action students enter with lower SAT scores (an average of 270 points lower on the combined scores) and lower high school GPAs (0.81 of a point lower on average between 1971 and 1983) than regularly admitted entrants. However, while the SAT scores of new entrants regularly admitted with fewer than 12.5 college units declined between 1971 and 1983, those of specially admitted new entrants rose.

Of the entrants admitted by special action between 1971 and 1978 with fewer than 12.5 college units, only 28.3% had graduated by Winter 1985.

The number of junior transfers declined substantially between 1973 and 1981, but rose again slightly in 1982 and 1983. Junior transfers graduate at rates higher than native students: 73.8% of students admitted as junior transfers between 1971 and 1980 had graduated by Winter 1985.

The number of new Affirmative Action entrants admitted with fewer than 12.5 college units has increased fairly steadily both absolutely and relatively since 1971, going from 107 students (5.9% of the cohort) in 1971 to 349 students (12.1% of the cohort) in 1984. Graduation rates of Affirmative Action students are substantially below those of all students admitted with fewer than 12.5 college units: of Affirmative Action students admitted between 1971 and 1978, 42.1% had graduated by Winter 1985.

The proportion of Affirmative Action students admitted by special action with fewer than 12.5 college units was consistently higher in the early seventies (about 40% between 1971 and 1973) than in the latter part of the decade. Reaching a low point in 1981 (27%), it has since begun to rise again (38% in 1984).

(pgrdexec.sum)

Introduction

The following report presents statistical data about the persistence and graduation rates of four groups of UC Davis undergraduates:

A. Domestic students regularly admitted with fewer than 12.5 college transfer units. This category varies from the Undergraduate Admissions Office definition of "students admitted from high school," which includes students with more college units as long as none were taken in a regular or extension college term after graduation from high school (excepting summer sessions immediately following graduation). Admissions defines as "advanced standing" all students who have enrolled in a college or university for a regular or extension session after graduation from high school (other than summer sessions immediately following graduation), regardless of the number of units earned.

B. Domestic students with fewer than 12.5 college units who were admitted by special action.

C. All domestic students (regular and special action) admitted with fewer than 12.5 college units.

D. Domestic students admitted with at least 84 but less than 135 college units (junior transfers).

A review of persistence and graduation rates, such as the material that follows, cannot be made outside the context of the admissions policies that differentiate among four classes of admittance: regularly admitted first-time entrants, specially admitted first-time entrants, regularly admitted advanced standing entrants, and specially admitted advanced standing entrants. Although a complete discussion of all differences among these four categories would be out of place here (see the Admissions section of the General Catalog for a fuller presentation), there are important differences. Especially to the point is the fact that admissions criteria differ for first-time ("native") and advanced standing entrants.

Special action admissions provides an opportunity for the University to accept students "outside the basic requirements of recommending units of high school work and/or aptitude tests . . ." and was proposed in 1960 to "be limited to 2 percent of all freshman admissions in each system for a given year" (A Master Plan for Higher Education in California, 1960-1975, p. 4). Subsequently, in 1969 and again in 1979, these limits were raised in 2 percent increments with the additional percentages being reserved for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. In addition, the Master Plan permitted the University to admit up to two percent of its advanced standing admissions by special action; this was raised to four percent in 1979.

In the interim, moreover, language associated with the concept of admission by special action underwent a subtle but significant shift. The Master Plan speaks of special action admission "limited" to two percent. In contrast, the "Report of the Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools on Freshman Admissions by Special Action" (October 1984) recommended "that the current four percent level of disadvantaged special admits should continue as an affirmative action goal . . ." (p. 16, emphasis added).

This shift in emphasis corresponds to attempts to increase the numbers of disadvantaged students admitted by special action. This intent is well served by reporting new special action entrants as a percentage of total new admits, a practice of the campus and the Office of the President. By contrast, the percentages in this report are based on entering cohorts and will necessarily be higher than those generally found in special action reports.

Except where otherwise noted, the information in this report is derived from the Composite Undergraduate File (CUF) updated through Winter 1985. There are some differences between the numbers of new entrants with fewer than 12.5 college units and of new junior transfers cited in this report and those cited in earlier reports derived from CUF. These differences occur because of differences in processing the data used to generate CUF and will have the largest impact on the number of new entrants reported for the years 1976-1979. In general, the numbers of new students cited in this report are lower than those cited in earlier reports.

Past Research

The following findings, contained in the Report of the UC Davis Task Force on Retention and Transfer (June 1980), provide background to this report:

A. About 60% of all freshmen regularly admitted to UC Davis graduate within five years; about half of those who graduate do so in their fifth year. The graduation rates of special action freshmen are about one-third of those of their regularly admitted peers.

B. Most attrition is voluntary; of regularly admitted freshmen entrants who leave, only 20% (about 7% of the entering cohorts) do so in academic difficulty, that is, with a cumulative and/or last quarter GPA below 2.0. Of the special action freshman entrant nonpersisters, about 60% (or 36% of all freshman special action entrants) leave in academic difficulty.

C. Attrition while in academic difficulty is related to entering academic qualifications; the lower the high school GPA or SAT score, the more likely the student is to leave in academic difficulty. Thus special action admits and regularly admitted freshman entrants with high school GPAs below 3.30 and/or SAT scores below 450 have relatively high rates of attrition.

D. Student Affirmative Action (SAA) and non-SAA special action students graduate at similar rates, while regularly admitted SAA freshmen graduate at a lower rate than their non-SAA counterparts. The lower graduation rate can be traced to a higher rate of attrition in academic difficulty and ultimately to lower entering academic qualifications. When entering academic qualifications are controlled for, there is no significant difference in the rates of attrition in academic difficulty of SAA and non-SAA students.

E. Attrition in good standing is not related to students' entering academic characteristics; nonpersisters leave because of a lack of integration into the campus academic system and/or social system. A substantial proportion leave because of difficulty with their academic coursework. Some leave because they are interested in programs not offered, while others do not like the emphasis of a specific program. Still others leave because they find their fellow students unfriendly and/or social and cultural activities on campus and in the Davis community lacking.

Characteristics of All Entrants Admitted with Fewer than 12.5 College Units

The number of students admitted with fewer than 12.5 college units (set forth in Table 1) is governed primarily by campus and Universitywide admissions policies. For example, according to Robert Ferrando, Assistant Director of Admissions, the decline in students admitted with fewer than 12.5 college units in the period from 1981 to 1983 was a direct result of an attempt to reduce the size of the undergraduate population on the campus.

TABLE 1

New Entrants with Fewer than 12.5 College Units

Fall	Regular Admit	Special Admit	Total	Percent Regular	Percent Special
1971	1748	69	1817	96.2%	3.8%
1972	1928	116	2044	94.3	5.7
1973	1895	81	1976	95.9	4.1
1974	1793	88	1881	95.3	4.7
1975	2018	118	2136	94.5	5.5
1976	1722	130	1852	93.0	7.0
1977	1784	120	1904	93.7	6.3
1978	1920	160	2080	92.3	7.7
1979	2155	210	2365	91.1	8.9
1980	2468	215	2683	92.0	8.0
1981	2276	166	2442	93.2	6.8
1982	2003	209	2212	90.6	9.4
1983	1972	213	2185	90.2	9.8
1984	2457	264	2721	90.3	9.7

Not all the variation, even significant variation, can be accounted for by changes in admissions policies. In 1984, for example, an unexpected increase in the number of admitted students redirected from the Berkeley campus enrolled at Davis, increasing substantially the number of new enrollees for that year.

The proportion of entrants with fewer than 12.5 college units admitted by special action has generally been increasing over time from 3.8% in 1971 to 9.8% in 1983 and 9.7% in 1984. This increase in the proportion of specially admitted entrants might be expected to lower the overall persistence and graduation rates; although this does happen, a decline in the graduation rates of regularly admitted students has an even greater effect (see the discussion of persistence and graduation rates later in this report).

Table 2 (on the next page) reveals a decline between 1971 and 1983 in the SAT scores of regularly admitted entrants with fewer than 12.5 college units [see also, "Trends in SAT Scores for UC Davis Students (1968-84),"

TABLE 2

SAT Scores and High School GPAs of New Entrants Admitted with Fewer than 12.5 College Units

Fall	Verbal SAT		Math SAT		SAT Combined		GPA[1] HS	
	Reg Admit	Spec Admit	Reg Admit	Spec Admit	Reg Admit	Spec Admit	Reg Admit	Spec Admit
1971	533	375	585	414	1118	789	3.50	2.72
1972	543	376	592	420	1135	797	3.63	2.61
1973	536	359	588	405	1124	764	3.66	2.69
1974	533	385	589	444	1122	829	3.67	2.82
1975	522	381	583	426	1106	807	3.66	2.66
1976	525	380	585	436	1110	815	3.66	2.85
1977	517	394	580	447	1097	840	3.62	2.82
1978	518	406	578	439	1095	845	3.61	2.92
1979	512	404	530	465	1082	870	3.59	2.99
1980	505	409	567	482	1072	890	3.61	2.77
1981	499	375	562	434	1061	810	3.62	2.89
1982	502	381	565	454	1067	834	3.63	2.91
1983	492	391	568	467	1060	858	3.60	2.91

[1]Evaluated A-F GPA.

Research Synopsis No. 10]. The rate of decline in verbal SAT scores is particularly troubling as it is almost twice that of the rate of decline in Math SAT scores and shows no sign of leveling off. These downward trends in SAT scores are not matched by a similar trend in A-F GPAs of students entering from high school, which have remained relatively stable during this period.

Unlike the SAT scores of regularly admitted students, those of special action admits have generally increased between 1971 and 1984. Their mean A-F GPAs have also been going up. The significance of these trends is surely open to question. The fact that the trends of SAT scores and A-F GPAs go in opposite directions for regular admits makes one wonder which, if either, is the better measure of high school preparation.

The 1980 Retention and Transfer study found attrition and entrance characteristics to be related only for students leaving in bad standing. These facts suggest that the relationships between entrance characteristics and rates of persistence and graduation, if any, must be complex and that no firm conclusions may be drawn from these particular data. One must interpret both the rise in SAT scores of special action entrants and the decline in SAT scores of regularly admissible new entrants with caution.

Persistence and Graduation Rates

A. Regularly admitted students entering with fewer than 12.5 college units

The persistence rates of regular admits who enrolled in four or more quarters vary slightly between 1971 and 1983, fluctuating from a high of 90.3% to a low of 85.3% (see Table 3 below). Similarly, the rates of persistence through seven quarters vary only slightly from a high of 79.2% to a low of 73.2%. In both cases, elimination of the high and low values leaves very tight groups, suggesting little change in persistence over time.

TABLE 3

Persistence and Graduation Rates of Students
Regularly Admitted with Fewer than 12.5 College Units

Fall	n	Persist[1]		Graduate within		Graduate
		4 Qtrs	7 Qtrs	12 Qtrs	15 Qtrs	
1971	1748	89.5%	77.2%	48.0%	64.3%	65.6%
1972	1928	89.7	77.3	50.3	66.4	67.6
1973	1895	89.9	76.6	46.9	66.4	67.7
1974	1793	87.1	75.4	43.7	64.5	65.7
1975	2018	88.3	75.3	35.7	59.8	61.4
1976	1722	89.4	76.5	38.5	63.6	66.4
1977	1784	85.3	73.2	31.3	58.0	61.0
1978	1920	88.3	76.9	29.1	60.0	62.1
1979	2155	88.1	78.2	30.0	58.1	NA
1980	2468	89.2	79.2	28.1	NA	NA
1981	2276	89.2	77.6	NA	NA	NA
1982	2003	90.3	76.6	NA	NA	NA
1983	1972	89.9	NA	NA	NA	NA
1984	2457	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

NA = Not available.

[1]Persistence and graduation rates are calculated on total quarters registered. The quarters need not be consecutive.

Graduation rates follow a different pattern. The percentage of regularly admitted students entering with fewer than 12.5 college units and graduating in twelve or fewer quarters has fluctuated rather widely, generally decreasing over time from a high of 50.3% to a low of 28.1%. There is a similar, if less extreme, decline in overall rates (from 67.7% to 62.1% with a further decline likely for the cohort of 1979) of regularly admissible students continuing to degree. Furthermore, the percentage of students who have taken more than 15 quarters to graduate by December 1985 has more than doubled (1.3% of the group entering in 1971; 3.0% of 1978 cohort). Students are taking more registered quarters to graduate, thus inflating the campus population.

The general decline in the graduation rates of regularly admitted students has a greater impact on the graduation rates of all new admits than the increase in the number of special action admits with their lower graduation rates.

B. Special action admits entering with fewer than 12.5 college units

The persistence rates of special action admits entering with fewer than 12.5 units of college level work fluctuate more widely than the rates of their regularly admitted peers. As Table 4 below shows, the percentages of special action admits registered for four or more quarters range from a low of 61.4% to a high of 83.3%; those registered for seven or more quarters range from 40.5% to 65.6%. In both cases persistence rates increase over time to 1980 and decline somewhat thereafter. The fluctuations seem to be more notable than the trends.

TABLE 4

Persistence and Graduation Rates of Students
Admitted by Special Action with Fewer than 12.5 College Units

Fall	n	Persist[1]		Graduate within		Graduate
		4 Qtrs	7 Qtrs	12 Qtrs	15 Qtrs	
1971	69	72.5%	47.8%	11.6%	21.7%	23.2%
1972	116	68.1	40.5	9.5	21.6	23.3
1973	81	65.4	50.6	17.3	30.9	33.3
1974	88	61.4	40.9	21.4	31.8	34.1
1975	118	66.1	50.8	13.6	29.7	32.2
1976	130	74.6	49.2	6.2	25.4	28.5
1977	120	73.3	55.8	10.8	22.5	25.8
1978	160	78.1	51.9	8.8	20.0	23.1
1979	210	77.6	62.9	11.0	33.8	NA[2]
1980	215	83.3	65.6	9.3	NA	NA
1981	166	82.5	63.2	NA	NA	NA
1982	209	75.6	58.8	NA	NA	NA
1983	213	76.6	NA	NA	NA	NA
1984	264	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

NA = Not available.

[1]Persistence and graduation rates are calculated on total quarters registered. The quarters need not be consecutive.

[2]As of December 1984 the total graduation rate of the 1979 cohort exceeded 34.2% and may be expected to go somewhat higher.

Like persistence rates, graduation rates of special action new registrants admitted with fewer than 12.5 college units vary substantially over time. Rates of graduation within 12 quarters range from a low of 6.2% to a high of 21.4%. Although fluctuations in the total graduation rates are smaller than those in the 12 quarter graduation rates, they are fairly wide nonetheless, ranging from a low of 23.1% to a high of 34.1%. No clear pattern emerges.

One heartening feature of the rates of graduation within 15 quarters is the jump from 20.0% for the 1978 entrants to 33.8% for those entering in 1979. It is not clear at this point just how anomalous this sudden rise in the graduation rate is, but there was a corresponding large increase in the persistence rates through seven quarters for the 1979 group; higher rates continue for the 1980 and 1981 cohorts. If these increases are somehow related, either directly or indirectly, the graduation rates for the cohorts entering in 1980 and 1981 may also improve.

Unfortunately, there does not seem to be a strong relationship between the rates of persistence to seventh quarter and overall graduation rates. Further investigation will be required to determine whether the factors influencing the fluctuations in persistence rates differ from those influencing the fluctuations in graduation rates for this population.

C. All domestic students entering with fewer than 12.5 college units

As one would expect, the persistence and graduation rates of all students entering with fewer than 12.5 college units generally parallel those of regularly admitted students. Table 5 (on the next page) shows that fourth and seventh quarter persistence rates have remained relatively constant since 1971. Twelfth quarter graduation rates, on the other hand, have declined substantially from a high of 48.0% in 1972 to a low of 26.6% in 1980. Unfortunately, there has not been a corresponding rise in overall graduation rates; in fact, these too have declined, although not so dramatically.

The tendency of students to take longer to graduate has contributed to the increase in the overall campus population. This increase is a special case of a more general tendency: increasing percentages of students are remaining on the campus for more than 15 quarters, whether or not they eventually graduate. Only 2.2% of the students entering with fewer than 12.5 college units in 1971 registered for more than fifteen quarters; 4.5% of those entering in 1978 did so.

TABLE 5

Persistence and Graduation Rates of All Domestic Students
Admitted with Fewer than 12.5 College Units

Fall	n	Persist[1]		Graduate within		Graduate
		4 Qtrs	7 Qtrs	12 Qtrs	15 Qtrs	
1971	1817	88.9%	76.1%	46.6%	62.7%	64.0%
1972	2044	88.4	75.2	48.0	63.9	65.1
1973	1976	88.9	75.5	45.7	65.0	66.3
1974	1881	85.9	73.7	42.7	63.0	64.2
1975	2136	87.1	74.0	34.5	58.2	59.8
1976	1852	88.4	74.6	36.2	61.0	63.8
1977	1904	84.6	72.1	30.0	55.7	58.8
1978	2080	87.6	75.0	27.6	56.9	59.1
1979	2365	87.2	76.9	28.3	55.9	NA
1980	2683	88.7	78.2	26.6	NA	NA
1981	2442	88.7	76.6	NA	NA	NA
1982	2212	88.9	74.9	NA	NA	NA
1983	2185	88.6	NA	NA	NA	NA
1984	2721	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

NA = Not available.
[1]Persistence and graduation rates are calculated on total quarters registered. The quarters need not be consecutive.

D. Junior Transfers

Persistence rates of junior transfers (see Table 6 on the next page) fluctuate more and are generally lower than those of students regularly admitted with fewer than 12.5 college units. At the same time, they fluctuate less widely and are generally higher than those of special action admits. The graduation rates of junior transfers, while subject to variation, are consistently higher than those of native students. Once again, however, there does not seem to be a connection between rates of persistence and graduation: keeping students longer does not necessarily lead to graduating them.

Although the graduation rates for cohorts entering from 1971 to 1973 are higher than those for the 1979 and 1980 cohorts, the graduation rate of the 1978 group is almost as high as those of the earlier groups and the graduation rates of the 1976 and 1977 groups are the lowest of all. Whatever this pattern may be, it certainly does not parallel the declining trend in the number of junior transfers.

TABLE 6

Persistence and Graduation Rates of All Domestic Students Admitted as Junior Transfers

Fall	n	Persist[1]		Graduate within		Graduate
		4 Qtrs	7 Qtrs	6 Qtrs	9 Qtrs	
1971	965	85.1%	60.0%	53.2%	77.0%	78.6%
1972	1147	84.7	58.4	54.1	76.7	78.6
1973	1240	83.9	57.0	52.6	74.1	76.8
1974	1152	81.9	49.3	49.1	70.9	72.4
1975	1233	81.4	54.8	48.0	71.3	73.2
1976	991	81.4	57.0	40.0	65.6	67.7
1977	782	82.2	52.5	37.6	64.4	66.9
1978	766	86.3	67.0	43.9	72.2	76.9
1979	658	84.4	67.0	36.0	68.2	73.6
1980	578	84.4	68.7	31.0	66.4	69.6
1981	506	87.2	67.2	39.7	68.6	NA
1982	587	85.7	57.7	34.8	NA	NA
1983	586	86.4	NA	NA	NA	NA
1984	620	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

NA = Not available.

[1]Persistence and graduation rates are calculated on total quarters registered. The quarters need not be consecutive.

E. Student Affirmative Action Entrants

As Table 7 (on the next page) reveals, UC Davis has enrolled increasing numbers of students from underrepresented minority groups between 1971 and 1984, in both absolute and relative terms. The apparent drop in the proportion of new Affirmative Action entrants from high school in 1980 is suspect; 1980 was the first year of the new Student Records System and the accuracy of ethnicity data for that year is questionable.

The persistence and graduation rates of Student Affirmative Action entrants (American Indians, Blacks, Chicanos, Latinos, and Pilipinos) vary substantially over time in no consistent pattern. One of the two cohorts with the highest graduation rates (1973 and 1974) has the second lowest rate of persistence to seven quarters (59.2%). Affirmative Action students entering with fewer than 12.5 college units are taking longer to graduate; their twelve-quarter graduation rates decline over time. This pattern resembles that of all new students entering with fewer than 12.5 college units. Student Affirmative Action entrants share with all special action entrants the curious increase in graduation rates in 1979.

TABLE 7

Persistence and Graduation Rates of All Student Affirmative Action Entrants Admitted with Fewer than 12.5 College Units

Fall	n	Percent of Cohort	Persist[1]		Graduate within		Graduate
			4 Qtrs	7 Qtrs	12 Qtrs	15 Qtrs	
1971	107	5.9	86.0%	72.9%	25.2%	43.0%	44.9%
1972	188	9.2	77.1	57.4	25.5	35.6	38.3
1973	124	6.3	79.0	65.3	25.0	47.6	49.2
1974	142	7.5	76.1	59.2	31.0	48.6	50.0
1975	172	8.1	79.1	65.1	18.0	39.0	40.7
1976	168	9.1	81.6	61.3	13.1	33.9	38.1
1977	173	9.1	78.6	65.3	13.3	37.0	43.4
1978	222	10.7	84.7	63.5	11.7	33.3	38.3
1979	247	10.4	83.0	69.2	15.4	39.3	NA
1980	242	9.0	85.1	69.0	11.6	NA	NA
1981	325	13.1	85.5	69.8	NA	NA	NA
1982	324	14.6	84.0	62.0	NA	NA	NA
1983	291	13.2	82.5	NA	NA	NA	NA
1984	349	12.1	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

NA = Not available.

[1]Persistence and graduation rates are calculated on total quarters registered. The quarters need not be consecutive.

The proportion of Affirmative Action students admitted by special action also varies widely between 1971 and 1984 as Table 8 (on the next page) demonstrates. There is, however, no obvious relationship between the proportion of students admitted by special action and graduation rate for that cohort. For example, 1973 and 1975 are very close in the proportion of students admitted by special action (45% and 46% respectively) but are far apart in overall graduation rates (49.2% and 40.7%).

TABLE 8

Proportion of Affirmative Action Students
with Fewer than 12.5 College Units at Entrance
Who Were Admitted by Special Action
-in percent-

Cohort	n	Percent Special Action	Cohort	n	Percent Special Action
1971	107	43%	1978	222	39%
1972	188	36	1979	247	32
1973	124	45	1980	242	32
1974	142	37	1981	325	27
1975	172	46	1982	324	32
1976	168	44	1983	291	36
1977	173	39	1984	349	38

Table 9 shows the distribution of junior transfers who are Affirmative Action students. It reveals a gradual increase in the early years (1971-1975) in the number of Affirmative Action junior transfers in both relative and absolute terms. The drop in the number of junior transfers that began in 1976 seems to have occurred proportionally with Affirmative Action junior

TABLE 9

Proportion of Junior Transfers
Who Are Affirmative Action Students
-in percent-

Cohort	n	Percent Affirmative Action	Cohort	n	Percent Affirmative Action
1971	36	3.7%	1978	46	6.0%
1972	42	3.7	1979	48	7.3
1973	61	4.9	1980	43	7.4
1974	63	5.5	1981	57	11.3
1975	92	7.5	1982	55	9.4
1976	63	6.4	1983	42	7.2
1977	71	9.1	1984	65	10.4

transfers as well, although there is a peak in the latter rate in 1977. In 1981, however, the proportion of Affirmative Action junior transfers increased suddenly and substantially. While this jump results primarily

from a substantial decline in the number of non-Affirmative Action junior transfers, some of it may be attributed to an absolute increase in Affirmative Action junior transfers.

Table 10 shows the ratio of the number of Affirmative Action students entering as junior transfers to the number entering with fewer than 12.5 college units. As is the case with the proportion of junior transfers who are Affirmative Action students (see Table 9), the ratio of junior transfers to entrants with fewer than 12.5 college units increases through 1975; in 1978 it drops substantially and continues to drop through 1983. In 1984, the ratio increases somewhat but one year does not a trend make. These data suggest that, despite at least partially successful efforts to increase the number of Affirmative Action students admitted as junior transfers, it is by increasing the proportion of new entrants admitted with fewer than 12.5 college units who are Affirmative Action students that the campus has had the greatest impact on the demographics of its student population.

TABLE 10

Ratio of Junior Transfers to New Entrants with Fewer than 12.5 College Units at Entrance
Affirmative Action Students Only

1971	33.6	1978	20.7
1972	22.3	1979	19.4
1973	49.2	1980	17.7
1974	44.4	1981	17.5
1975	53.5	1982	17.0
1976	37.5	1983	14.4
1977	41.0	1984	18.6

The persistence and graduation rates of Affirmative Action students admitted as junior transfers are presented in Table 11 (on the next page). Because the numbers of Affirmative Action junior transfers are relatively small, any absolute changes in graduation can lead to large shifts in the rates. Accordingly, the data in Table 11 should be interpreted with caution.

Affirmative Action junior transfers consistently persist and graduate at rates lower than those for other junior transfers. The reasons for these lower rates cannot be inferred from these data and require further study. Like other junior transfers, Affirmative Action juniors graduate at substantially higher rates than their peers admitted with fewer than 12.5 college units.

TABLE 11

Persistence and Graduation Rates of Affirmative Action Students Admitted as Junior Transfers

Fall	n	Persist[1]		Graduate within		Graduate
		4 Qtrs	7 Qtrs	6 Qtrs	9 Qtrs	
1971	36	75.0%	21.0%	47.2%	55.6%	55.6%
1972	42	78.6	45.0	52.4	64.3	66.7
1973	61	78.7	50.0	50.8	70.5	73.8
1974	63	79.4	52.4	33.3	60.3	63.5
1975	92	75.0	39.3	39.1	57.6	58.7
1976	63	73.0	45.8	23.8	46.0	49.2
1977	71	66.2	42.0	29.6	53.5	56.3
1978	46	80.4	60.6	28.3	60.9	65.2
1979	48	87.5	72.7	31.2	62.5	68.8
1980	43	79.1	59.5	14.0	51.2	51.2
1981	57	79.0	59.5	26.3	54.4	NA
1982	55	81.8	40.5	23.6	NA	NA
1983	42	76.2	NA	NA	NA	NA
1984	620	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

NA = Not available.

[1]Persistence and graduation rates are calculated on total quarters registered. The quarters need not be consecutive.

Affirmative Action students are quite diverse and aggregrating them may obscure important differences among them. Accordingly, it is worthwhile to examine the constituent subpopulations that make up the Student Affirmative Action population.

As Table 12 (on the next page) shows, the largest proportion of the Student Affirmative Action population is Black, ranging from a little less than half in 1972 to about one-third in 1980. In the last four years the share has remained fairly steady at slightly more than one-third of the Student Affirmative Action entrants admitted with fewer than 12.5 college units. The next largest group, the Chicano population, ranges from a high of 31.5% in 1973 to a low of 21.0% in 1983. In three of the last four years, the Chicano share has held around 25%.

One group, American Indians, has been relatively constant in absolute numbers, fluctuating between a high of 22 in 1983 and a low of 8 in 1979. Because these numbers have been relatively constant, the proportion of American Indians in the population of Student Affirmative Action entrants from high school has shrunk.

Another group, Pilipinos, shows a consistent pattern of increase; this increase has been both absolute, going from seven new Pilipino students admitted with fewer than 12.5 college units in 1971 to 76 in 1984, and

TABLE 12
Distribution of New Student Affirmative Action Entrants
Admitted with Fewer than 12.5 College Units
by Ethnicity and Entering Cohort
-in percent-

	All SAA n	American Indian	Black	Chicano	Latino	Pilipino
1971	107	16.8%	34.6%	27.1%	15.0%	6.5%
1972	188	9.6	47.9	26.6	13.3	2.7
1973	124	13.7	37.1	31.5	8.1	9.7
1974	142	8.5	41.5	30.3	9.2	10.6
1975	172	5.2	41.3	31.4	11.6	10.5
1976	168	8.3	39.9	32.1	11.9	7.7
1977	173	5.8	44.5	28.3	11.6	9.8
1978	222	5.9	40.5	21.2	22.1	10.4
1979	247	3.2	40.9	27.5	16.2	12.1
1980	242	4.5	33.1	30.2	17.4	14.9
1981	325	4.9	36.6	25.2	13.5	19.7
1982	324	4.3	35.2	26.9	14.5	19.1
1983	291	7.6	37.1	21.0	14.4	19.9
1984	349	4.3	35.0	24.9	14.0	21.8

relative, going from 6.5% of the population of new Student Affirmative Action entrants admitted in 1971 with fewer than 12.5 college credits to 21.8% in 1984. Most of this increase has come from increases in the number of regularly admitted Pilipino new entrants with fewer than 12.5 college units; although the number of specially admitted Pilipinos with fewer than 12.5 college units has increased, the proportion in 1981-1984 is about the same as it was in 1972-1975, ranging from a low of 20.0% to a high of 27.8%, as shown in Table 13 (on the next page).

As the graphs (Figures 1 and 2) below demonstrate, the ethnic minority groups making up the Student Affirmative Action population persist and graduate at different rates. Persistence rates in particular seem to vary more by year of entering cohort than they do by ethnic group. Graduation rates, on the other hand, show a definite pattern, with Chicanos consistently graduating at higher rates than Blacks. This pattern may be directly related to the fact that the proportion of Blacks admitted by special action is much larger than that of Chicanos (see Table 13).

TABLE 13

Distribution of Affirmative Action Ethnic Groups
by Admission Action
-in percent-

Fall	American Indian			Black			Chicano			Latino			Pilipino		
	n	Reg	Sp	n	Reg	Sp	n	Reg	Sp	n	Reg	Sp	n	Reg	Sp
1971	18	44.4%	55.6%	37	40.5%	59.5%	29	69.0%	31.0%	16	75.0%	25.0%	7	85.7%	14.3%
1972	18	33.3	66.7	90	70.0	30.0	50	48.0	52.0	25	96.0	4.0	5	80.0	20.0
1973	17	58.8	41.2	46	39.1	60.9	39	53.8	46.2	10	100.0	0.0	12	75.0	25.0
1974	12	50.0	50.0	59	55.9	44.1	43	62.8	37.2	13	84.6	15.4	15	80.0	20.0
1975	9	22.2	77.8	71	38.0	62.0	54	59.3	40.7	20	95.0	5.0	18	72.2	27.8
1976	14	50.0	50.0	67	23.9	76.1	54	74.1	25.9	20	90.0	10.0	13	100.0	0.0
1977	10	70.0	30.0	77	37.7	62.3	49	73.5	26.5	20	80.0	20.0	17	100.0	0.0
1978	13	69.2	30.8	90	36.7	63.3	47	74.5	25.5	49	79.6	20.4	23	87.0	13.0
1979	8	87.5	12.5	101	45.5	54.5	68	75.0	25.0	40	87.5	12.5	30	96.7	3.3
1980	11	81.8	18.2	80	42.5	57.5	73	72.6	27.4	42	90.5	9.5	36	83.3	16.7
1981	16	81.2	18.8	119	52.1	47.9	82	82.9	17.1	44	88.6	11.4	64	85.9	14.1
1982	14	78.6	21.4	114	48.2	51.8	87	78.2	21.8	47	76.6	23.4	62	79.0	21.0
1983	22	72.7	27.3	108	41.7	58.3	61	75.4	24.6	42	76.2	23.8	58	79.3	20.7
1984	15	66.7	33.3	122	45.9	54.1	87	70.1	29.9	49	69.4	30.6	76	73.7	26.3

Figure 1

7th Quarter Persistence Rates of SAA Entering Cohorts

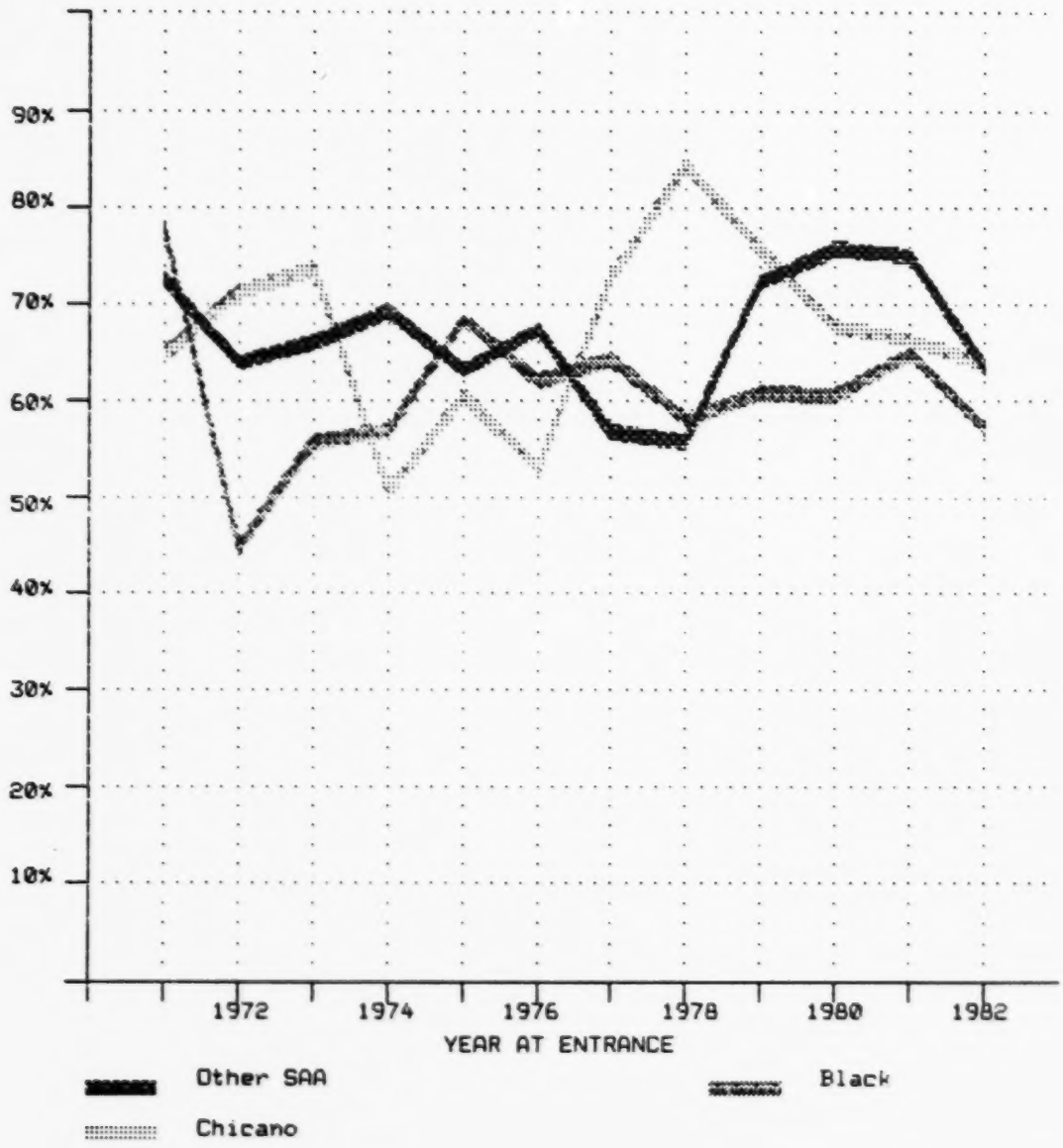
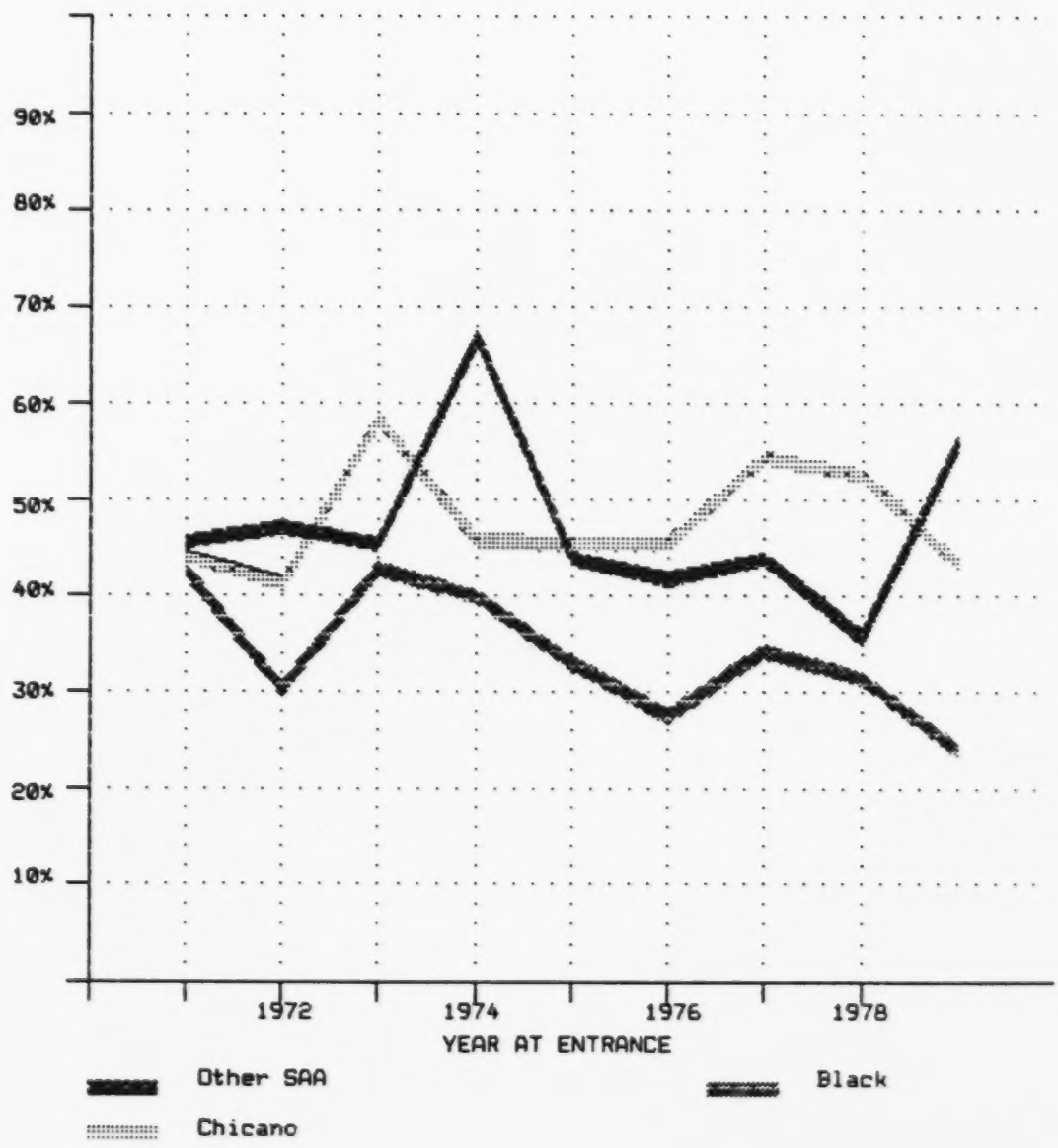


Figure 2

Overall Graduation Rates of SAA Entering Cohorts



Conclusions

The data presented in this report shows that UC Davis continues to graduate native students at rates higher than the national average. Unfortunately, the graduation rates have been declining over time. A decreasing percentage of students are graduating, either in four years or at all. Both these facts should be of concern and they may be related phenomena. Increases in time in residence to degree raise the cost of the degree for both the student and the institution. One may speculate that some students do not persist to graduation because they exhaust their resources before completing their studies.

Fourth and seventh quarter persistence rates have been relatively constant for native students since 1971. This fact is of particular interest in light of declining overall graduation rates. It suggests that attrition rates late in the academic career (after, say, the ninth quarter) are increasing and that the causes of increased time in residence are also contributing to decreases in the graduation rates. More investigation is called for before any clear conclusions along these lines can be drawn.

Junior transfers continue to graduate at rates higher than native students. The persistence rates of this group fluctuate from year to year and do not display any long-term trends. Of greater interest is the decline between 1973 and 1981, and subsequent slight increase in 1982 and 1983, of new transfer students. The decline was in spite of and the increases at least partially because of increases in the number of Affirmative Action students transferring to Davis as juniors.

The number of Affirmative Action students attending UC Davis has increased fairly steadily both absolutely and proportionately since 1971 (with a surge in 1972 and drops in 1979 and 1980). Even so, the populations have been small; wide variations in persistence and graduation rates could result from small variations in the population. It would be easy but unwise to overinterpret the variations.

The proportion of Affirmative Action students admitted by special action with fewer than 12.5 college units was consistently higher in the early seventies than in the latter part of the decade. It reached a low point in 1981 but has since begun to rise again. Continued increase of the proportion of Affirmative Action students admitted by special action should be of some concern.

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